

## Lebanon prepares for beatification of priest known for prolific school works

Contributed by Anthony Elghossain, Daily Star staff  
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BEIRUT: A Lebanese priest will take a step toward sainthood on Sunday, when the beatification of Father Yaaqoub Haddad Kabouchi will take place in Beirut's Martyrs Square.

During his lifetime, Father Haddad - known as Qabouna Yaaqoub in Arabic - founded the Congregation of Franciscan Sisters of the Cross in Lebanon in 1933 as well as numerous hospitals, rest homes and schools throughout the country.

kalam al nas report - Justin Ishac - Montage : Gilbert Cherfen - 19/06/2008 Abounna Yaaqoub Haddad Kabouchi - LBC TV Beirut

{youtube}kqBv4CMpUDI{/youtube}

Born on February 1, 1875, in the village of Ghazir in the Kesrouan district, Kabouchi was the third child in a family of 14. At the age of seven, Kabouchi joined Saint Francis Elementary School in Ghazir before moving on to Sagesse School in Beirut. He later moved to Alexandria, Egypt, to teach Arabic at Saint Mark for the Brotherhood of Christian Schools.

Born with the name Khalil, Kabouchi received the moniker of "Brother Yaaqoub" upon joining Saint Anthony's Monastery for theological studies on the path to priesthood. After returning to Lebanon, Kabouchi founded a number of schools before becoming director of the Capuchin school network in Lebanon and conceiving the idea for constructing the renowned Jesus the King Church near Nahr al-Kalb.

By 1945, he suffered from deterioration in his health, gradually losing both the ability to hear and see. Kabouchi died in 1954, and his last words were reportedly: "This is the last day I have on this earth ... Oh God, I rest my soul in your arms."

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